HEALTHY EATING
GUIDE FOR EMPLOYEES

KEEPING WELL @ LUL
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THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN DEVELOPED BY NUTRITION EXPERTS. IT WILL HELP YOU TO CHOOSE THE BEST TYPES OF FOODS FOR HEALTHY EATING.
Healthy eating is not just for those people wanting to lose weight. It can give you more energy, help you to look good and feel great; as well as reducing your risk of a number of common diseases like heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and osteoporosis. A healthy diet and lifestyle can help you to enjoy an active and rewarding life both now and in the future.

This guide has been developed by nutrition experts. It will help you to choose the best types of foods for healthy eating. The guide also includes advice on managing your weight, shift work and a range of other topics.

The guide is designed to be used by adults (although most information is also suitable for children over the age of five). If you are under medical supervision, please check with your doctor to see whether you should use this guide.
What is a healthy diet?

We require energy to live, but the balance between carbohydrate, fat and protein must be right for us to remain healthy. We need enough vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre for health.

All foods can be part of a healthy diet – you won’t have to give up your favourite food. What’s important is achieving the right balance and the right variety of foods. The pie-chart (called the Balance of Good Health) can help. It shows the proportion and types of foods needed to make up a healthy diet.

Foods from the largest groups should be eaten most often in the greatest amounts and foods from the smallest group should be eaten least often and in the smallest amounts.

Try and choose a variety of foods from each of these four food groups every day:
- Bread, other cereals and potatoes
- Fruit and vegetables
- Milk and dairy foods
- Meat, fish and alternatives.

No single food contains all the nutrients we need to be healthy. This means we have to eat a variety of foods to get the nutrients we need.

Foods in the fifth group are foods containing fat and foods containing sugar. You don’t have to ban these foods from your diet. They can be eaten but not instead of foods from the other food groups, or too often or in large amounts.
Balance of Good Health

- **Fruit and Vegetables**: 33%
- **Bread, other cereals & potatoes**: 33%
- **Milk and dairy foods**: 15%
- **Meat, fish and alternatives**: 12%
- **Foods containing fat and foods containing sugar**: 7%
What is a healthy diet?

**Fluids**
A healthy diet should include 6 to 8 glasses (1.2 litres) of water or other fluids every day to stop dehydration. Dehydration can cause headaches, tiredness, and constipation. Get into the habit of drinking regularly - by the time you feel thirsty, you will already be dehydrated. Although tea and coffee can count avoid having too much of them (or any other drinks containing caffeine) as large amounts work as a diuretic. Try drinking herbal teas, chicory or decaffeinated tea or coffee instead. Also avoid drinking soft or fizzy drinks that are high in added sugar. If its warm or you are being active, drink a bit more.

**Alcohol**
Alcohol does not feature in the Balance of Good Health, but if you do drink, men should have no more that 3-4 units per day and women no more that 2-3 units per day. One unit equals is 10ml of pure alcohol and this can be a single measure of a spirit, a half a pint of ordinary strength beer or lager, or a small (125 ml) glass of wine. Try to avoid binge drinking.

**Physical activity**
We all need to be more active and try to do at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least 5 times a week.
FAT, PROTEIN AND CARBOHYDRATE ARE THE MAIN NUTRIENTS THAT GIVE YOU ENERGY BUT THEY ALSO HAVE OTHER ROLES.
Food is made up of different building blocks. Fat, protein and carbohydrate are the main nutrients that give you energy but they also have other roles. While fibre doesn’t provide much energy, it has other important functions.

Most foods are a combination of these different building blocks, while other foods may contain mostly one building block e.g. butter is mainly fat while whole milk contains some fat as well as protein.

**WHAT IS IT AND WHAT DOES IT DO? / Adult GDA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carbohydrate / 230 grams (including 90g of total sugars)</th>
<th>MAIN SOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The two main types of carbohydrate are sugars and starch. While all carbohydrates are broken down into glucose, sugars are broken down more quickly than starches (starches are important for sustained energy). Glucose is the preferred fuel for the body and it is the only fuel your brain can use.</td>
<td>Sugars – table sugar, honey, jam, sweets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protein / 45 grams</strong></td>
<td>Starches – potatoes, pasta, rice and other cereals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein is made of amino acids. Different foods contain different amounts and combinations of amino acids. Protein is important for growth &amp; repair of body.</td>
<td>Meat, fish, chicken, dairy products, eggs, soya and soya products, nuts. Cereal products can also contribute to protein intake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fat / 70 grams (including 20g saturates)</strong></td>
<td>Oils, butter and other spreads and foods containing these ingredients (e.g. crisps, biscuits, cakes, pies &amp; pastries). Also in dairy products, meat, fish, poultry and nuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat is made up of different types of fatty acids. Fat provides the 2 essential fatty acids your body needs. These and fatty acids synthesised from them are important in the formation of cell membranes particularly in nerve tissue. Fat also carries fat-soluble vitamins and helps in their absorption.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fibre / 24 or 18 grams (depending on method used)</strong></td>
<td>Cereal foods, beans, lentils, fruit and vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fibre describes a number of different substances which cannot be broken down by our enzymes. Instead bacteria living in our gut digest it. Fibre can help prevent constipation, as well as lowering blood cholesterol and/or blood glucose levels.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*GDA = guideline daily amount. These figures are estimates of daily needs for healthy adults of normal weight and physical activity level.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEALTHY EATING TIPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Try to have at least 1 serving of fresh fruit or vegetables each day</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have a glass of juice at breakfast or add some dried fruit to your breakfast cereal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Add extra vegetables to casseroles and stews, and add fruits to desserts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Choose fruit canned in juice rather than syrup</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grab some fruit as a snack</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Add some cucumber and tomatoes to your sandwiches</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Have a salad with pizza</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fruit and Vegetables

How much should you eat?
Most of us need to eat more fruit and vegetables. Variety is important too so try to eat at least 5 portions of different fruits and vegetables every day.
Each day eat 18-24g of dietary fibre

What counts?
Fresh, frozen, dried and canned fruit and vegetables all count. 100% fruit or vegetable juices, pure juice smoothies, beans and pulses (e.g. baked beans and lentils) count but only once regardless of how much you drink or eat.
Juice drinks don’t count as they don’t have enough fruit. They are made with varying quantities of fruit juice and they contain lots of sugar.

One portion is 80g. This equals:
1 apple, banana, pear or orange / 2 plums / 1 slice of melon or pineapple / 1 cupful of grapes, cherries or berries / 3 heaped tablespoons of fruit salad or stewed fruit / 1 glass (150ml) of fruit juice (counts once) / 1 heaped tablespoon of dried fruit / 1 cereal bowl of salad / 3 heaped tablespoons of vegetable

WHY EAT THESE FOODS?
These foods are naturally low in fat and calories. They also provide:

- Vitamin C / needed for healthy skin and tissue, also to help your body absorb iron
- Carotenes / needed for growth and development
- Folate / needed for red blood cells
- Fibre / keeps the gut healthy and prevents constipation
- Carbohydrate / a source of energy
- Phytochemicals / may help protect against some diseases
HEALTHY EATING TIPS

Avoid frying or adding too much fat to these foods
e.g. don’t add ghee when making chapattis, and spread butter or margarine thinly on bread

Try some different types of bread e.g. bagels, pitta bread and try to include some wholemeal
and wholegrain varieties as these have the most fibre

Try some wholegrain or wholemeal pastas and cereals which also have more fibre

Choose low fat oven chips rather than fried chips (oven chips fall into this food group but fried chips don’t)

Choose wholegrain breakfast cereals rather than those coated with sugar or honey
Bread, other cereals and potatoes

**What counts?**
Bread, breakfast cereals, pasta, rice, oats, noodles, maize, millet and cornmeal. Potatoes (including low fat oven chips), yams, plantain and sweet potato also count in this group (rather than as vegetables) because they have more in common with these foods in that they contain lots of starchy carbohydrate (see p. 12).

**How much should you eat?**
Despite what some people think, most of these foods are naturally low in fat and most of us should eat more. Try and have at least one food from this group at each meal.

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**WHY EAT THESE FOODS?**
These foods provide:

- **Carbohydrate / a source of energy**
- **Fibre / keeps the gut healthy and prevents constipation**
- **Some calcium / needed for healthy bones**
- **Some iron / needed for healthy red blood cells**
- **B vitamins / e.g. thiamin and niacin which help the body use energy**
- **Folate / needed for red blood cells**

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Each day eat 18-24g Dietary fibre
**HEALTHY EATING TIPS**

| Use semi-skimmed or skimmed milk in your tea, coffee or hot chocolate | Try using fromage frais, quark or plain yogurt in place of cream in some dishes (you may need to test this out first) |
| Grate cheese for use in salads, sandwiches and baked potatoes - you’ll use less | |
| Try using lower fat cheese on toast, in sauces and in cooking | |
Milk and dairy foods

What counts?
Milk, cheese, yoghurt and fromage frais. Calcium-fortified soya alternatives to milk can also count but butter, cream, crème fraiche and eggs don’t (they fall into other food groups).

How much should you eat?
Try to have 2-3 servings each day. A serving is a 200 ml glass of milk, a small pot (150g) of yoghurt or fromage frais or a matchbox size (30g) amount of cheese.

WHY EAT THESE FOODS?
These foods provide:

- Calcium / needed for healthy bones
- Zinc / needed for growth and repair
- Protein / needed for growth and repair; also used for energy
- Vitamin B12 / needed for blood cells and for nerves
- Vitamin A / (in whole milk products) for growth, development and eyesight
- B vitamins / e.g. thiamin and niacin which help the body use energy
**HEALTHY EATING TIPS**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Tip</th>
<th>Tip</th>
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<tr>
<td>Choose lower fat meat products and lean cuts of meat</td>
<td>Try not to eat too many meat products like sausages, salami, pâté &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove the visible fat from meat and poultry</td>
<td>beef burgers as they are generally high in fat and often high in salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try grilling, roasting, or microwaving rather than frying, or try dry frying</td>
<td>Remember meat products in pastry such as pies and sausage rolls are often high in fat so only have these foods occasionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drain off fats from roast meats and skim off excess fat from gravies, sauces and stews</td>
<td>Eat oily fish like salmon, mackerel, trout, herring, fresh tuna, sardines, pilchards and eels at least once a week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Meat, fish and alternatives

What counts?
Meat, meat products (e.g. bacon, salami, sausages, beef burgers and pate), poultry, offal, fish (including frozen and canned fish, fish fingers and fish cakes), eggs, nuts, beans and pulses (e.g. lentils), soya, tofu, mycoprotein and textured vegetable protein (TVP).

How much should you eat?
Most of us should eat moderate amounts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY EAT THESE FOODS?</th>
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<tr>
<td>These foods provide:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein / needed for growth and repair; also used for energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron / especially from red meat, needed for healthy red blood cells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B vitamins / especially vitamin B12 which is needed for blood cells and for nerves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin D / in meat, required for healthy bones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zinc / needed for growth and repair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnesium / helps the body use energy; needed for healthy bones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omega-3 fatty acids / in oily fish; may help protect against heart disease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foods containing fat - what counts?

The adult Guideline Daily Amount is 70g for fat and 20g for saturates

Margarine, butter, other spreading fats and low fat spreads, ghee, cooking oils, oil-based salad dressings, mayonnaise, cream, fried foods, chocolate, crisps, biscuits, pastries, cakes, puddings, ice-cream, rich sauces and gravies

We need a small amount of fat in our diet but it needs to be the right type of fat and in the right amount.

There are 3 main types of fat.

Saturates
Associated with animal products (e.g. butter, margarine, ghee, lard, dripping, fatty meat, full fat dairy products) and cakes, biscuits and pastries.

Trans fats
Can be formed when vegetable oils are turned into margarine or other spreads. Often found in biscuits and cakes, fast foods, pastry, and some margarines. Foods containing hydrogenated vegetable oil, which must be listed in the ingredients list on the label, might also contain trans fats.

HEALTHY EATING TIPS

Choose low fat foods where possible
Use vegetable oils including sunflower, rapeseed and olive oil
Use spreads and oils sparingly – try using a spray oil
Use just a small amount of vegetable oil instead of lard or ghee
Try not to add fat to foods when cooking
Use a reduced fat spread instead of butter
Unsaturated fats
The two types of unsaturated fats are found in a range of foods. Monounsaturates are found in olive and rapeseed oil, and spreads made from these oils as well as peanut oil, while polyunsaturates are found in some vegetable oils such as sunflower and corn oil, spreads made from these oils, nuts, seeds, meat and oil rich fish.

While all types of fat contain the same amount of calories (9 per gram of food), they can affect our health in different ways. Too many saturates or trans fats can increase our blood cholesterol and increase our risk of heart disease. Unsaturated fats do not raise blood cholesterol so they are a better choice.

The type of polyunsaturates found in oily fish (called omega 3 or n-3 fatty acids) may be good for our hearts in other ways. This is why we should try to eat at least one portion of oily fish each week. Women who might be expecting a baby should have no more than 2 portions per week; other adults can have up to 4.

CHECKING LABELS FOR FAT
Labels can tell you how many grams (g) of fat there are in 100g of food. Some labels also give information on levels of saturates, trans fats, polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats in foods. Try to limit saturates and trans fats, and total fat if you are watching your weight.

This is a lot of fat:
20g or more per 100g,
5g saturates or more per 100g

This is a little fat:
3g fat or less per 100g
1g saturates or less per 100g
Foods containing sugar - what counts?

Soft drinks (not diet drinks), sweets, jam, honey, sugar, cakes, puddings, biscuits, pastries and ice-cream.

Sugar can also be described on labels as sucrose, glucose, fructose, maltose, hydrolysed starch and invert sugar, corn syrup and honey.

We don’t need to cut down on the sugars that occur naturally in fruit (glucose or fructose) or in milk and milk products (lactose).

How much should you eat?
Most of us should eat less. This is because these foods provide energy but may contribute only small amounts of other nutrients. Also, eating sugary foods and drinks frequently can lead to tooth decay. Most of us eat far more from this group than we actually need.

CHECKING LABELS FOR SUGAR

This is a lot of sugar:
10g sugars or more per 100g

This is a little sugar:
2g sugars or less per 100g

HEALTHY EATING TIPS

Try reducing the sugar in your tea and coffee gradually until you can cut it out altogether

Try and cut down on added sugars, especially those in processed foods and soft drinks

Foods that contain added sugar can also be high in calories, so cutting down could help you control your weight

Try to keep sugar-containing drinks and foods for mealtimes

Choose reduced sugar foods where possible
Focus on salt

The adult Guideline Daily Amount is 2.4g for sodium and 6g for salt

Your body needs some salt (sodium chloride) to work properly but too much can increase blood pressure. Most of us eat more salt than is good for our health. The average adult intake is 9.5g a day while the recommendation is 6g a day. Not adding salt to your food during cooking or at the table will help to reduce your intake but about 75% of the salt we eat comes from processed foods.

Checking labels for salt
Sodium is often listed as on food labels instead of salt.
Salt = sodium x 2.5

This is a lot of salt:
1.25g salt or more per 100g
0.5g sodium or more per 100g

This is a little salt:
0.25g salt or less per 100g
0.1g sodium or less per 100g

Healthy eating tips

Some sauces, such as soy sauce, can be high in sodium; use these in moderation or choose a reduced sodium option if possible.

Choose canned vegetables & pulses marked ‘no added salt’ & products canned in water rather than brine, such as canned tuna.

Look for ‘reduced salt’ or ‘reduced sodium’ versions of everyday foods such as bread, baked beans, tomato ketchup, crisps, biscuits, butter, fat spreads, soups, gravy granules, crackers and ready-meals.

Stock cubes are high in sodium, so choose lower salt versions, or make your own stock. Or you could try adding herbs and spices for flavour instead.

If you add salt in cooking or at the table, try using ‘low sodium’ salt substitutes (do not use these if you have kidney problems).
Vitamins and minerals are nutrients that are needed in the body in tiny amounts. They have different roles in the body and are found in a variety of foods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MINERAL</th>
<th>MAIN FUNCTION</th>
<th>MAIN SOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>Important in the formation and maintenance of bones and teeth. It also has a role in blood clotting and nerve &amp; muscle function.</td>
<td>Milk, cheese, yoghurt &amp; canned fish are rich sources. Also dark green leafy vegetables, white brown flour &amp; bread, fortified soya products &amp; nuts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sodium</td>
<td>Involved in the regulation of the body's water content as well as nerve function.</td>
<td>Salt - either added to foods during processing, or at home in cooking or at the table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potassium</td>
<td>Important part of body fluids.</td>
<td>Almost all foods contain potassium. Fruits, vegetables &amp; milk are rich sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnesium</td>
<td>Involved in energy transfer in the cell, in enzyme activity &amp; in nerve &amp; muscle functioning.</td>
<td>Widespread but wholegrain cereals, nuts &amp; green leafy vegetables are good sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phosphorus</td>
<td>Essential component of all cells and present in bones and teeth.</td>
<td>Milk, cheese, meat, fish and eggs are good sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>Important part of red blood cells but also has a role in the body's immune system.</td>
<td>Red meat and offal are rich sources. Cereals, bread, and vegetables contain some. Breakfast cereals may be fortified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zinc</td>
<td>Essential for growth, and sexual maturation. Involved in enzyme activity and taste.</td>
<td>Milk, cheese, meat, eggs and fish, wholegrain cereals and pulses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iodine</td>
<td>Important for the production of thyroid hormones.</td>
<td>Milk, seafood, seaweed. Iodised foods such as salt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluoride</td>
<td>Important for dental health.</td>
<td>Fluoridated water, tea, fish and toothpaste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selenium</td>
<td>As an antioxidant it helps protect cell membranes against oxidation. Component of a number of enzymes.</td>
<td>Cereals, meat, fish, offal, cheese and eggs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manganese</td>
<td>Role in bone formation and is also an antioxidant.</td>
<td>Cereals, vegetables &amp; tea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITAMIN</td>
<td>MAIN FUNCTION</td>
<td>MAIN SOURCES</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fat soluble vitamins</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>Essential for normal vision and growth; also important for skin.</td>
<td>As retinol in milk, fortified margarine, butter, cheese, egg yolk, liver and fatty fish. As carotenes in milk, carrots, tomatoes, dark green vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D</strong></td>
<td>Required for calcium and phosphorus absorption from food and therefore essential for normal bone and tooth structure.</td>
<td>Sunshine, fortified margarine, oily fish, egg yolk, fortified breakfast cereals, meat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td>Antioxidant that protects cells and cell membranes from damage by oxidation.</td>
<td>Vegetable oils, nuts, vegetables and cereals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K</strong></td>
<td>Essential in the formation of blood clotting proteins. Required for normal bone structure.</td>
<td>Synthesis by bacteria in the gut. Dark green leafy vegetables, e.g. cabbage, brussel sprouts and spinach.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Vitamins and minerals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vitamin</th>
<th>Main Function</th>
<th>Main Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water-soluble vitamins</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin C</td>
<td>Involved in the production of collagen which forms part of bone and connective tissue. Helps with wound healing and iron absorption.</td>
<td>Fresh fruits especially citrus fruits and berries; green vegetables and tomatoes. Also found in potatoes (especially new potatoes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thiamin (vitamin B1)</td>
<td>Involved in the release of energy from carbohydrate. It is important for the brain and nerves which use glucose for their energy needs.</td>
<td>Cereals, nuts and pulses are rich sources. Green vegetables, pork, eggs, fruits and fortified cereals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riboflavin (vitamin B2)</td>
<td>Involved in energy release, especially from fat and protein.</td>
<td>Rich sources are liver, milk, cheese, yoghurt, eggs, green vegetables, yeast extract, and fortified cereals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niacin</td>
<td>Involved in the release of energy.</td>
<td>Rich sources include liver, beef, pork, mutton and fish. Most breakfast cereals are fortified. Some is made in the body from tryptophan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B6</td>
<td>Essential for the body to use protein.</td>
<td>Found in a variety of foods. Major sources include meat, whole grain products, vegetables and nuts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B12</td>
<td>Necessary for the proper formation of blood cells and nerve fibres.</td>
<td>Rich sources are offal and meat. Eggs and milk also contain B12. Fortified breakfast cereals are a useful source.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folate</td>
<td>Involved in the formation of blood cells. Reduces the risk of neural tube defects like spina bifida in babies.</td>
<td>Liver, orange juice and dark green vegetables are rich sources. Nuts, wholemeal bread, milk and fortified breakfast cereals also provide folate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Weight management

It’s important to try and be the right weight and shape. Being overweight can lead to health problems such as diabetes, heart disease or high blood pressure. You may also want to lose weight to get fitter, to look and feel better about yourself. Being underweight can also affect your health.

The most effective way to manage your weight is to combine healthy eating habits with regular physical activity.

If you think you need to lose weight, forget about short term dieting – what you need to do is to make long-term lifestyle changes. Most diets are so restrictive that they are hard to stick to in the long term. Move away from ‘dieting’ which suggests that once you lose weight you can go back to your old eating habits.

If you’d like to lose weight:
- Try keeping a diary of your current eating and activity patterns to help to identify some areas for change
- Set yourself realistic goals
- Try & have breakfast every day
- Fill up on fruits, vegetables and wholegrain foods which are naturally low in fat
- Try to choose low-fat and low-sugar varieties of foods
- Drink plenty of fluids but go easy on the alcohol
- Consult your GP or a registered nutritionist for advice on healthy eating

If you’d like to put on weight:
- Try eating larger portions of food at each meal
- Try having healthy between-meal snacks such as dried fruit, unsalted nuts or a sandwich
- Add a smoothie or a between meal shake to your eating plan
Weight management

We all need to be more active and we should try to do at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least 5 times a week. If you’re trying to lose weight you will probably need to do more than this. You don’t have to join a gym or buy any special equipment. Try some of the following:

- Take the stairs instead of using the escalator or lift
- Break up your working day by taking a walk during your lunch break
- At work walk down the hall to speak with someone rather than using the telephone
- Try walking to the local shops
- Work in the garden or mow the grass
- Do some DIY
- Plan a family outing that includes physical activity such as football or swimming
- Use a pedometer to see how active you are, aim for 10,000 steps a day
- On the school run, park further away from the school, it will be good for you and the children
- Go dancing
- Walk the dog for longer and at a faster pace
- Make exercise a normal part of your daily routine

Shopping Tips & Time Saving Suggestions

One of the important steps in eating better is making sure you have healthy foods on hand. So how you shop can make a difference. The first step is good preparation, while the other is learning more about food labels as they contain lots of information that can help you make better choices.

Plan your shopping

Before you head out to the shops write your shopping list. A third of what you plan to buy should be fruits and vegetables, including fresh produce. If not, add some more of these foods to your list (this could be a bunch of bananas, a bag of frozen peas or a can of tomatoes). Don’t forget to add some healthy snacks to your list.

Don’t shop on an empty stomach – you’ll only impulse buy. Instead, try shopping after a meal or, to reduce temptation even more, try shopping on-line.
Diet and lifestyle

SHIFT WORK

Diet

- Have regular meals – not only will this be good for your digestive system but it may stop you overeating when you do eat. It will also give you the energy you need to keep going longer without getting tired.

- Eating soon after getting up helps to stimulate your metabolism.

- When starting early, your mid/late morning break should include light proteins, low fat foods and carbohydrates.

- Drinking plenty of water helps you avoid getting dehydrated and can improve concentration.

- High sugar snacks can give you a rush of energy, but that’s followed by a low that can make you tired again. Take some healthier treats with you (e.g. a piece of fruit or a small bag of unsalted nuts, dried fruit or sunflower seeds) to avoid snacking on high fat, high sugar, high salt foods.

- Avoid heavy meals after midnight. If you need to eat before you sleep, try a small snack (e.g. toast) or a non-alcoholic drink (e.g. glass of milk).

- Avoid caffeine and alcohol in the hours before you go to sleep (they may disturb your sleep).

Physical activity

- Try and fit some physical activity into your day. It can help you to adjust to working shifts and it can help you sleep.

- Don’t do any strenuous workouts too close to bedtime – it will just make you feel more alert.

- Use some of your time off to enjoy outdoor activities e.g. walking, jogging or gardening.

Other lifestyle factors

Cigarettes are stimulants and can affect your ability to fall and (stay) asleep.

Listening to music during breaks can help you to relax and unwind.

To get good sleep your bedroom should be dark (black out curtains can help), quiet and cool.

To avoid interruptions, turn off your mobile phone and switch on your answer phone before you go to bed.

Aim for about 7-8 hours sleep. If you sleep for too long, you will feel tired and your sleep will tend to be more fragmented.

If you can’t get to sleep within 15-30 minutes, get out of bed until you feel sleepy.

Taking a power nap (a short 15-20 minute nap) before working nights will help keep you alert.

Shift work can make life difficult. Some shift workers may have digestive problems associated with disturbed sleep, stress and poor diet. There’s more on digestive problems on page 34, but here are some other tips you can try.

Shift work can make life difficult. Some shift workers may have digestive problems associated with disturbed sleep, stress and poor diet. There’s more on digestive problems on page 34, but here are some other tips you can try.
A healthy diet is important for every mum-to-be and her growing baby. In particular, a healthy pregnancy needs enough iron, calcium and folate (these nutrients are highlighted in the different food groups earlier in this leaflet). Women who might have a baby should take supplements of folic acid (400 micrograms a day) as this can help to reduce the risk of the baby having a neural tube defect like spina bifida.

If you are pregnant, you should also:
- Stay physically active
- Watch your intake of alcohol and caffeine (see www.eatwell.gov.uk for details)
- Reduce your risk of food poisoning by avoiding ‘high risk’ foods like pate, unpasteurised goat’s milk or goat’s cheese, blue-vein and soft cheeses, and following good food hygiene tips (e.g. wash raw fruits and vegetables, cook meat and chicken thoroughly, wash your hands before cooking)
- Avoid eating shark, swordfish and marlin and have no more than 2 portions of oily fish per week (this is because of the levels of potential contaminants in these fish)
- Not take supplements containing vitamin A or eat liver and liver products (e.g. paté) which may contain large amounts of vitamin A
Diet and lifestyle

VEGETARIAN DIETS

If a vegetarian diet is varied and balanced, it can provide all of the nutrients you need. Vegetarians and vegans (people who don't eat any food of animal origin) should eat a variety of vegetable proteins such as grains, nuts, seeds, tofu, beans and lentils. For example, eat baked beans on toast, tuck into dhal and rice or have a peanut butter sandwich. If you are a vegetarian who eats dairy products and eggs, this will also help you meet your protein needs.

Most vitamins can be provided by plant foods, apart from vitamin B12. If you don't eat any foods of animal origins, you can take a dietary supplement and/or look for foods with added vitamin B12. Vitamin D is found naturally in only a few foods, all of which are of animal origin, for example eggs, whole milk and its products. Some breakfast cereals, yoghurts and all margarines and reduced fat spreads are fortified with vitamin D. Your body can also make vitamin D but this requires sunlight on skin. If you don't get much exposure to the sun, you may want to consider taking a vitamin D supplement.

Serious deficiencies of minerals are not widespread in vegetarians but a varied diet is important. Other suggestions include:

- Having a glass of fruit juice with your main meal (this will help your body absorb the iron)
- Don’t drink tea with meals - it can stop iron being absorbed
- If you don’t eat dairy products, choose calcium-fortified soya products instead
Religion can influence eating patterns so if you are entertaining or catering for guests, you need to take this into consideration. For example:

- Most Hindus will not eat meat or fish. Animal fats are unacceptable so ghee (clarified butter) and vegetable oil are used in cooking. Very strict Hindus may not eat eggs.
- Muslims don’t eat pork or related products. They also don’t eat shellfish or seafood without fins or scales or drink alcohol. All meat has to be ritually slaughtered (halal).
- Sikhs don’t eat beef and are unlikely to eat pork. Although some are vegetarians, many eat chicken, lamb and fish. They also don’t drink alcohol.
- Jewish food traditions don’t allow pork or associated products; shellfish are also not allowed. Meat and chicken must be ritually slaughtered (kosher), and meats must not be cooked with milk or milk products or be served at the same meal.
Digestive problems

Digestive problems are common. Some are minor and can be managed by changing your diet, while others may need medical attention.

Heartburn
Heartburn is the burning sensation you feel when food or drink travels from your stomach back up your gullet. This is the main symptom of reflux. While we don’t know why some people get reflux and others don’t, there may be some things you can change which will help. For example, avoid eating large meals before turning in for the night. Some people find certain foods such as coffee, alcohol, spicy foods or chocolate trigger their symptoms. Try reducing these foods to see if this helps. If your symptoms don’t settle down, please see a doctor.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
We don’t know what causes IBS but the symptoms (which include stomach pain, and a change in bowel habit, either constipation or diarrhoea) can be similar to those seen in more serious conditions. So it is important to see your doctor for a diagnosis. Changing your diet may help – people with constipation-type IBS may find increasing foods rich in dietary fibre (such as wholegrain breakfast cereals and breads, fruits, vegetables and pulses) may help, while those with diarrhoea-type IBS may benefit from a decrease. Some people with IBS also find avoiding large intakes of caffeine (more than 6-8 cups of coffee a day) helps.
Digestive problems

Ulcers
An ulcer is a sensitive patch, which forms a break in the lining of the stomach or part of your gut. Ulcers occur when the acid ‘eats’ away at the lining (which is usually protected). The main symptom is severe stomach pain which often gets better when eating and at night, and is sometimes accompanied by vomiting.

While there is sometimes no explanation for why an ulcer develops, smoking, heavy drinking and certain medicines such as aspirin and anti-inflammatory drugs can cause ulcers or make existing ulcers worse. People who regularly have to take aspirin or anti-inflammatory drugs should discuss with their doctor how to reduce the effects on their stomach. Stress probably does not cause ulcers, but it can make symptoms worse if you already have an ulcer.

While some ulcers heal by themselves within a month, drug treatment is very effective. The main dietary advice is to avoid foods which give you indigestion and to have regular meals.

Food intolerances
Most people can eat a wide range of foods without any problems. However, some people react badly to certain everyday foods and eating them may cause uncomfortable symptoms including sickness, vomiting and diarrhoea. In rare cases it may cause a severe illness. These unpleasant reactions are food intolerances.

As many of the symptoms associated with food intolerance can also be caused by other unrelated conditions, it is important to see your doctor for a diagnosis. If you think you have a food intolerance, it is important not to change your diet dramatically so that it becomes unbalanced. You need to make sure that your diet has a wide variety of foods; a dietitian may be able to help.
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